

pimple on a pumpkin. The City actually has on their docket a resolution to give a portion of University Ave a courtesy name of Mable Thomas. The Rivers family name is big in that area.

In an era of sensitivity in the north end I am not sure there has been a lot of north end involvement in this matter versus other more pressing issues, although apparently the remodeling went through the Planning Commission with some north end approval. The Bethal AME church had already taken out the Rivers house in order to extend their parking lot and they are willing to sell 9 ft to the Sullivan Project.

We are aware that the old north end community has been thinning out. The mural has made its mark and been useful but it may need to die gracefully. The mural is breaking down to the point that in order to repair it the bricks would have to be stripped and the mural repainted. at a cost of near to 50,000. Perhaps another something would be better. Part of the problem is that Bradley community is heavy on title 8 housing input people who do not seem to mesh well with the older more stable community.

I recently was talking to T J Blakeman who was historical committee chair for the sesquecentennial and I asked him about the general lack of north end information and in the exhibit and he said that it was very hard to find written or general photographic information about he and he had looked thousands of pictures at he archives and elsewhere.

Considering the rather tense climate in the north end it might not be too far fetched to ask the City to contribute to a structure and art piece possibly at the end of the east end of the AME church lot that would record history give the north end character.

I would rather discuss this sort of thing behind the scene because I have a very poor chance of changing anything once it has hit the Council. Nor do I have the talent to do much with three minutes on the floor. What I would like to do is put the resolution on hold while the City sees if it could do anything to give character to the situation.

Sharon will not be at work tomorrow because she is involved with a workshop but she is going to send Jeff some materials including info about the recent fifty year old maps and photographs that have been deposited with the Urbana Archives. The latter have yet to be worked over to make them accessible so they are not useful in respect of the Sullivan Building. Sharon may send you links to some things.

If there anything you can do to remind the City that the area round the mural is a part of the history of Champaign that would be helpful.

The very best thing we could do is to come up with a viable suggestion because that is often what can make a difference. Might be something that would include pre-black, mainly Irish settlement then the black settlement. Perhaps the student

May 17, 2010

To Sam Smith from David Monk,

I checked the City package that goes to the councilors today and to my surprise found that the Sullivan Building on Park and Fifth was going to be remodeled with any mention of the historic nature of the street and without any reference to the mural or the two houses the grey family bought to house black students.

I found the planner named Jeff (Jeff Grant I think ED: Jeff Marino) who prepared the resolution. I think he was learning a lot about the street in the short time we were together before 5 o'clock. He has a photo of the mural on his computer but it is a side view that gives no idea of what was intended by the story line. Jeff wants information and an early face-on photo would be helpful I do have one but it would take time to unearth. I also have a brochure that Sharon has scanned.

Sharon has some info. She said you were aware that the building was to be modified. As a community non prophet agency we can not afford news papers so we usually don't know about these things till they hit the deck, by which time they are a fete a complis. I doubt if there was any investigation of what is in the archives. There has to be Comprehensive Training Act (CETA) info that was generated by the Nixon era community support money that gave rise to the mural. The names of the artists are on the mural. There has to be a lot of other info about the street.

The fact that the mural concept went down the street to the then Boys Club where it inspired murals that remain was not noted. Whatever, even if some of the community has moved away that doesn't mean that the history of the community should not remain. We don't get rid of Gettysburg because the Civil War is over. We label the place and give it status and the public visits. The fact that Ameren is buying up EPA 'doubtful land' and that the Big Dig is taking out housing hasn't helped the community cohesiveness.

Champaign and Urban and the University have been breaking into the north end a lot over the years. At one stage a Steak house on Goodwin with 60 parking lots that were more than adequate for the number of customers, went across the road and took out a house facing University and one behind it facing Park on the justification that the steak house needed the extra space for parking! The community caught up with that and the parking was not allowed. There was a minor castigation for taking out the house without adequate reference to the zoning authorities but by then the houses had been removed and block had effectively been "busted" to the advantage of strip development and later hospital development. Recent changes have overshadowed this event but the spirit of strip development still exists.

I do not want to get in the way of serious development and gentrification but the historic matters should get an airing before the development occurs. I think the Sullivan owner was the same gentlemen who gave the space for the mural so he may be quite amenable to some art incorporation be it restoration of the mural or some other art form that would meld with the history of the street and not look like a

houses could be incorporated before they are demolished. One student house over by Neil has recently been torn down for open space. I will dream but I am also in heavy non survival mode and time is of the essence. Could the student houses be a sort of lived in history with gardens as of the past? Just a thought.

Sharon is having Angela to town again shortly in case that can mean anything. Angela might like know what is going on. I suspect there are a few others who would like to be informed.

Thanks for taking the time to appreciate my concerns.

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